

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

With entry of this amendment, claims 30 - 46 are pending in this application. Original claim 1-29 are canceled without prejudice to Applicants' right to prosecute the subject matter of these claims in a related, co-pending application. Applicants submit this Preliminary Amendment with this continuation application of U.S. Application No. 09/574,996, which has been allowed. No new matter is believed to be added to this application.

The specification is amended to include a claim to priority under 35 U.S.C. § 120 to the parent U.S. Patent Application No. 09/574,996, filed May 19, 2000.

Support for new claims 30-46 is found throughout the instant specification, such as, for example, at the following: page 3, line 15 to page 4, line 2; page 6, line 11 to page 8, line 22, and the original claims in the parent application. No new matter is believed to be added by these claims.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 206-467-9600.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 12/15/03

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